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Rhonda Schwartz, “The Menendez Prostitution
‘Scandal’: How It Happened,” ABC NEWS,
Mar. 6, 2013



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The Menendez Prostitution 'Scandal': How It Happened

By RHONDA SCHWARTZ, BRIAN ROSS and NED BERKOWITZ ·
March 6, 2013

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"I have no idea who is behind these efforts, but I hope that the press will pursue them as vigorously to find out who was behind these efforts as they did in the first place," Menendez said Tuesday. "All I know is obviously there must be interests [who] were trying to defeat me in my election and who obviously did not want to see me in my role as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee."

It all started last year as Menendez campaigned for re-election. Six days before the votes were cast, GOP operatives helped to arrange Skype interviews in the Dominican Republic with three women who all told ABC News the Senator paid them for sex. Two of the women repeated the claims to a conservative news website, the Daily Caller.

Their interactions with Menendez supposedly took place at the famed

Dominican resort Casa de Campo and at the home there of one of the Senator's campaign donors, where the GOP operatives claimed in reports that surveillance teams learned of raucous pool parties where "everyone [was] naked, of course."

But during the ABC News interviews, none of the women could produce identity cards with their names, and they all provided the same story almost word for word, as if they had been coached.

They were, according to a sworn affidavit filed in court this week by one of the three women, who says it was all a set up.



In the affidavit, she said that she and the others were paid to use fake names and make up a story about sex with the Senator. A Dominican official familiar with the case confirmed that the woman in the affidavit, identified as Nexis de los Santos Santana, was the same woman who wore a yellow blouse when interviewed by ABC News.

In her interview with ABC News before the election, she said her name was S. vWorld

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Weather
Photos

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Woman Says She Was Paid to Lie About Claim of Sex With Senator Menendez

By RHONDA SCHWARTZ and BRIAN ROSS • March 5, 2013

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Sen. Robert Menendez, D-N.J., right, and Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., left, announce with other senators that they have reached agreement on...

467
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Allegations that Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ), the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, had sex with prostitutes in the Dominican Republic were a lie, according to a young woman who signed an affidavit saying she was paid to make the false claims in the week before last year's elections.



Last fall, Republican operatives, who insisted on anonymity, helped arrange the woman's appearance, along with two additional women, in back-to-back, on-line interviews with ABC News and a conservative news website, the Daily Caller.

In the weeks before the women were presented to be interviewed, the operatives also distributed what was described as "surveillance reports" by private detectives reporting on naked pool parties at the Dominican Republic home of a Menendez friend and campaign contributor, Dr. Salomon Melgin, a Florida eye surgeon.

ABC News did not broadcast or initially report on the claims because of doubts about the women's veracity and identity.

The Daily Caller reported extensively on the claims in the week before the election, even as Menendez strongly denied them. The Senator questioned why other news outlets repeated the allegations based on anonymous sources and interviews with two of the women whose faces were obscured when shown on the conservative news site.

The woman, who was not present when her affidavit was revealed at a press conference by an attorney in the Dominican Republic Monday, said her performance last year was arranged by a Dominican lawyer who had her rehearse statements and promised to pay her well.

Early Tuesday the Daily Caller said the woman who said she was lying was not one of the women featured in their original report. However, the attorney who presented the affidavit Monday identified the woman to reporters in attendance as the female wearing a yellow shirt in a video on the Daily Caller website.

"I never slept with Mr. Menendez nor Mr. Melgin," the woman, Nexis de los Santos Santana, said in her sworn statement, adding she did not know the Senator or the doctor."So therefore I don't have any relationship of any kind with the aforementioned people."

In her interview with ABC News before the election, she said her name was Michelle Rodriguez and that she had come forward because Menendez had paid her only \$100 of the \$500 she had expected. She now says she was coached to make the claim.

Her account of sex with Menendez in the video interview was almost word-for-word the account given by two other women who were produced for interviews about having sex with the man they knew only as "Bob."

Asked during the interview with ABC News how she knew that the man named "Bob" was a United States Senator, one of the other women said she had put the name "Bob" into a web search site and a picture of Menendez popped up.

Menendez told reporters Monday, "I've always said that these are all false, they're smears, and so I look forward to seeing whatever the Dominican courts have that prove what I've said all along."



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